

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are currently pending. Claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended; and Claims 16-18 have been added by the present amendment. The changes and additions to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,956,698 to Lacheze et al. (hereinafter “the ‘698 patent”).

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the interview granted Applicants’ representative on June 7, 2005, at which time a proposed amendment to Claim 1 regarding the page count information was discussed. At the conclusion of the interview, the Examiner agreed that the proposed amendment would likely overcome the cited prior art. However, no formal agreement regarding the patentability of the claims was reached pending the Examiner’s further consideration of the claims upon formal submission of a response to the outstanding Office Action.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a method of monitoring usage of a monitored device, comprising: (1) receiving an electronic mail message transmitted using an Internet protocol, the electronic mail message comprising information related to usage of the monitored device; (2) automatically extracting identifying information of the monitored device from the electronic mail message; (3) automatically extracting page count information of the monitored device from the electronic mail message, the page count information being cumulative over all jobs performed for all users of the monitored device; and (4) automatically storing the page count information in association with the identifying information in a database. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the page count

information is cumulative of all jobs performed for all users of the monitored device. The changes to Claim 1 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.¹

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 (and dependent Claims 2-5) are rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1.

The '698 patent is directed to a printing system in which the billing for a print job by a user is accounted for using an accounting log manager. As shown in Figures 3-5, the '698 patent discloses a system in which a "billable event supplier" sends a "description" of a billable event to an accounting log manager, which may then record the billable event. In this regard, the '698 patent discloses that the descriptions "are provided by, among other sources, various subsystems of the resource layer 16, which resources may be distributed across local and/or wide area networks."² However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '698 patent fails to disclose receiving and automatically extracting information from an electronic mail message, as recited in amended Claim 1. The '698 patent does not refer to email messages, except with reference to sending information to a user from the print system broker. However, the '698 patent fails to disclose that information of a monitored device is received in an electronic mail message, automatically extracted from the electronic mail message, and then stored in a database in association with the identifying information.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the '698 patent fails to disclose that page count information is automatically extracted, the page count information being cumulative of all jobs performed for all users of the monitored device, as recited in amended Claim 1.

Rather, the '698 patent is directed to the reporting and accounting of a billable event, e.g., a printing job by a particular user, and the "descriptions" disclosed by the '698 patent do not

¹ See, e.g., Figure 25 and the discussion related thereto in the specification.

² '698 patent, column 8, lines 58-61.

include page count information that is cumulative of all jobs performed for all users of a particular monitored device, as recited in amended Claim 1. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 (and dependent Claims 2-5) patentably define over the '698 patent.

Independent Claims 6 and 11 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. Moreover, Claims 6 and 11 have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment to Claim 1. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 6 and 11 (and all associated dependent claims) are rendered moot by the present amendment to Claims 6 and 11.

The present amendment also sets forth new Claims 16-18 for examination on the merits. New Claim 16, which depends from Claim 1, recites the further step of automatically extracting information of a total number of jobs performed of the monitored device from the electronic mail message. Further, new Claim 17, which depends from Claim 1, recites the step of automatically extracting information of capabilities of the monitored device from the electronic mail message. Further, new Claim 18, which depends from Claim 1, recites the further step of automatically extracting information of a total number of jams of the monitored device from the electronic mail message. New Claims 16-18 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.³ Moreover, based on the asserted allowability of Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 16-18 patentably define over the '698 patent.

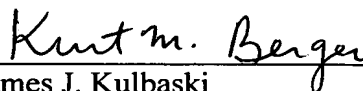
Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 6, and 11 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over the '698 patent.

³ See, e.g., Figure 25 and the discussion related thereto in the specification.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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